SIBBALD POINT PROVINCIAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Ontario

Ministry of Natural Resources

Hon. Vincent G. Kerrio
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Sibbald Point Provincial Park Management Plan

Ontario
Ministry of Natural Resources

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Richmond Hill, Ontario
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"We are pleased to approve Sibbald Point Provincial Park Management Plan, as official policy for the management and development of this park. The plan reflects this Ministry's intent to protect natural and cultural features of Sibbald Point and maintain and develop high quality opportunities for outdoor recreation and heritage appreciation for both residents of Ontario and visitors to the Province."

M. Fordyce
Regional Director
Central Region

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Director, Parks
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1. INTRODUCTION

Sibbald Point Provincial Park (hereafter referred to as "Sibbald Point" or "the park") is situated on the south shore of Lake Simcoe, in that part of the Regional Municipality of York that is Georgina Township. The park is approximately 40 km northeast of the regional urban centre of Newmarket, and approximately 60 km north of Metro Toronto.

Sibbald Point is a recreation class park with 648 campsites, 6 group campsites and day-use car capacity of 1800 vehicles located on a land base of 199 hectares. (see Section 3.4, Park Boundary). The park is a key provincial park offering combined year-round camping and day-use recreation for the Metro-Toronto Central Region. From 1980 to 1983, day-use attendance increased by 14% to approximately 110,000 visitors annually. During this same period, camper nights increased .7%.

Of cultural significance, the park is located on the original site of the Sibbald Family Estate, which dates back to 1835. Original structures remaining from the estate include the manor house (Eildon Hall - presently an operating museum), employee residences (Castle Dangerous, Coachman's House, and Indian Cabin), the formal Carriageway, foundation marks of the grange and barnyard buildings, landscaped grounds and St. George's Church (immediately outside the park boundary). The park became a provincial park in 1957, by inclusion in Regulation 280/57.

Noteworthy earth and life science features include: a diverse variety of vegetative communities, a marshy area that attracts spawning pike, the shorecliffs along the northwest corner of the park and the beach.

It is for the purpose of planning, development and management of the park's natural, recreational and cultural resources that this management plan is being prepared.

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ISSUES AND POLICY DECISIONS

The effect of over use on the environment and facilities has been monitored by park management and a desirable carrying capacity, based on the total number of 1800 day use cars, has been established.

Spreading use out more equitably over the park's limited land base will be achieved through site planning measures (i.e. improve access to the underutilized northwest day-use area). At the same time, upgrading and maintenance of existing facilities in line with their use is a priority item.

A historical zone with management guidelines for this resource will be established. Restoration suggestions for Eildon Hall, as provided by an architectural report, will be implemented pending Ministry priorities and funding. Further studies (i.e. Historical Buildings Feasibility and Rehabilitation Study) will be conducted to determine the interpretive potential of the other historical components of the estate.

Outside storage requirements of the Lake Simcoe Fisheries Assessment Unit will be satisfied elsewhere in the park away from the prime shoreline.

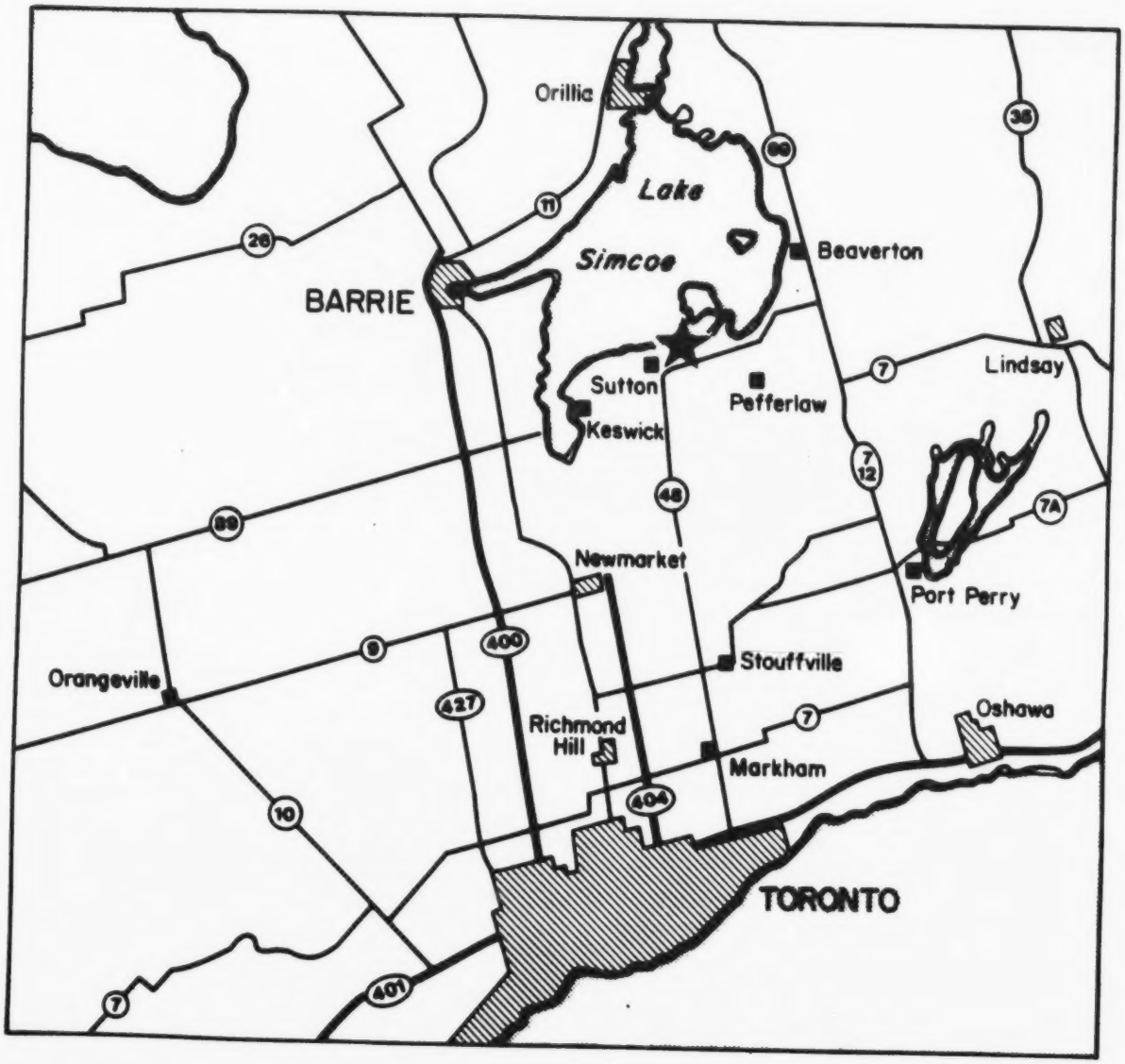
Figure 1

Regional Context

Legend:

Park Location

1 cm : 1 km (approx.)



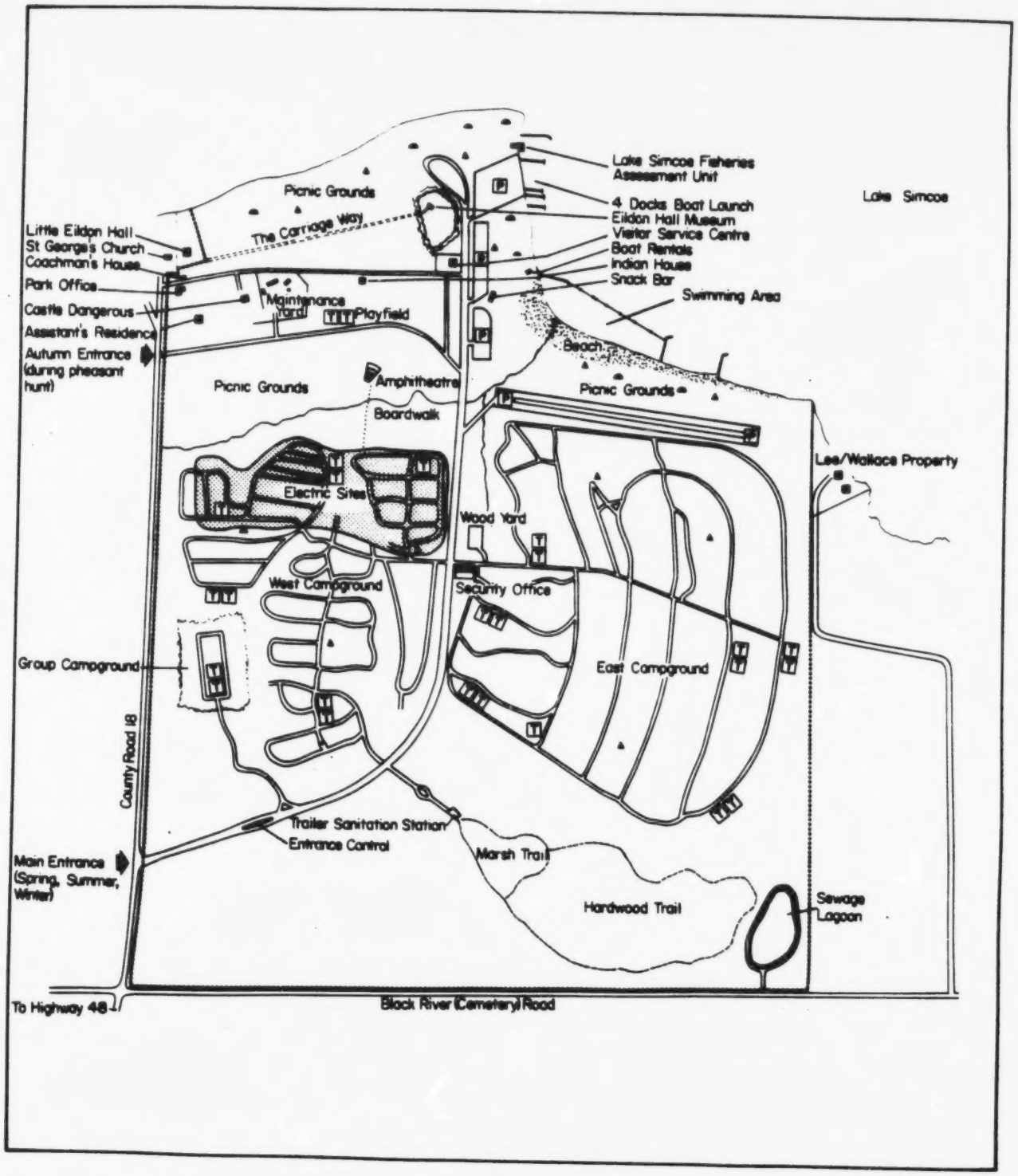
10 0 10 20 30 kilometres

Figure 2

Existing Development

Legend

- Picnic Shelter
- Comfort Station
- Parking
- Toilet
- Groyne
- Park Boundary



3. PARK POLICIES

3.1 Park Classification

Sibbald Point is classified as a "Recreation" park in recognition of the park's wide variety of outdoor recreation opportunities.

3.2 Park Goal

To maintain and operate Sibbald Point as a provincial park offering combined year-round camping and day-use opportunities principally for the Metro-Toronto Centred Region.

The park will maintain the Sibbald Estate as a historic site as well as aid in the communication of the "Sibbald Story" to visitors (see Section 5.1.2).

3.3 Park Objectives

3.3.1 Recreation Objective

The recreation objective of the Provincial Park's system is to provide Provincial Park outdoor recreation opportunities ranging from high-intensity day use to low-intensity wilderness experiences.

The recreation objective of this park is to provide day use and camping facilities, some of which are available on a year-round basis, that utilize the area's prime recreational resources. As it is the park provides:
- 156,200 camping opportunities;
- 127,000 swimming opportunities;
- 535,600 picnicking opportunities.

These recreational opportunities at Sibbald represent 100% of those supplied by the Ministry, in a provincial park, in the Maple District. In the future, some of these percentages will decrease as alternative opportunities are provided by the Ministry elsewhere in the district (i.e., Duclos Point Provincial Park, Forks of the Credit Provincial Park).

3.3.2 Heritage Appreciation Objective

The heritage appreciation objective of the Provincial Park's system is to provide opportunities for exploration and appreciation of the outdoor natural and cultural heritage of Ontario.

The heritage appreciation objective of this park is to provide a range of opportunities for the exploration, interpretation and appreciation of the cultural (Sibbald Estate) and natural features of the park (swampy woodlands, woods in south east corner of park).

3.3.3 Protection Objective

The protection objective of the Provincial Park's system is to protect provincially significant elements of the natural and cultural landscape of Ontario.

The protection objective of this park is to protect the cultural and natural resources of the park through zoning that is sensitive to the particular resource management needs of the park's features as well as to the recreational pressures placed on these resources.

3.3.4 Tourism Objective

The tourism objective of the Provincial Park's system is to provide Ontario's residents and out-of-province visitors with opportunities to discover and experience the distinctive regions of the Province.

The tourism objective of this park is to provide Ontario's residents and out-of-province visitors, with travel information and camping/day-use opportunities in order that they can discover and experience the south Lake Simcoe region. The park in 1979 contributed four and one-half million dollars to the provincial economy annually through park expenditures and tourist

spending. It is the objective of the ministry to maintain and possibly increase the economic contribution of this park to the local economy.

3.4 Park Boundary

The park's 199 hectares refers to its land base. However, regulation of the park includes 226 ha. The difference involves the park's offshore waters, which are actually under federal jurisdiction. A working agreement with the Trent-Severn Waterway will be negotiated in the future in order for the park to obtain authorization for management of the offshore area. The final dimension and size of this extension of the park's jurisdiction will be determined during these negotiations. The present regulated waterlot extends 152.4 m from shore and includes 27 ha.

There are no plans for any major expansion of the park's boundary. However, if the Little Eildon property (northwest corner) becomes available, purchase of this site is advisable in order to consolidate the historic zone.

The buildings on the Wallace (Lee) property (northeast corner) will be assessed to determine their eventual use, or removal. The land will be kept as a buffer between the campground and neighbouring cottages.

3.5 Zones and Zone Policies

All lands within Sibbald will be zoned (see Figure 3) in recognition of their existing and potential environmental qualities, required protection and their potential for recreation and interpretive use within the context of the overall four objectives of the park.

Summary of Zoning (land base only)

Zones	Hectares
Development	120.5
Historic	13.5
Natural Environment	65.0

3.5.1 Development Zone

•The development zone contains the day-use area, campgrounds, administrative and recreation facilities and services.

Development Zone Policies

•To improve the landscape aesthetics and the environmental quality of this zone, where possible.

•To maximize recreational opportunities by maintaining and improving upon existing resources/facilities and the provision of new facilities as deemed necessary.

•In providing additional recreational facilities, adjacent to the historical zone, site design will be sensitive to the protection of the historical resources and ambience found there.

•To distribute day visitors more equitably throughout the underutilized areas within this zone.

3.5.2 Historical Zone

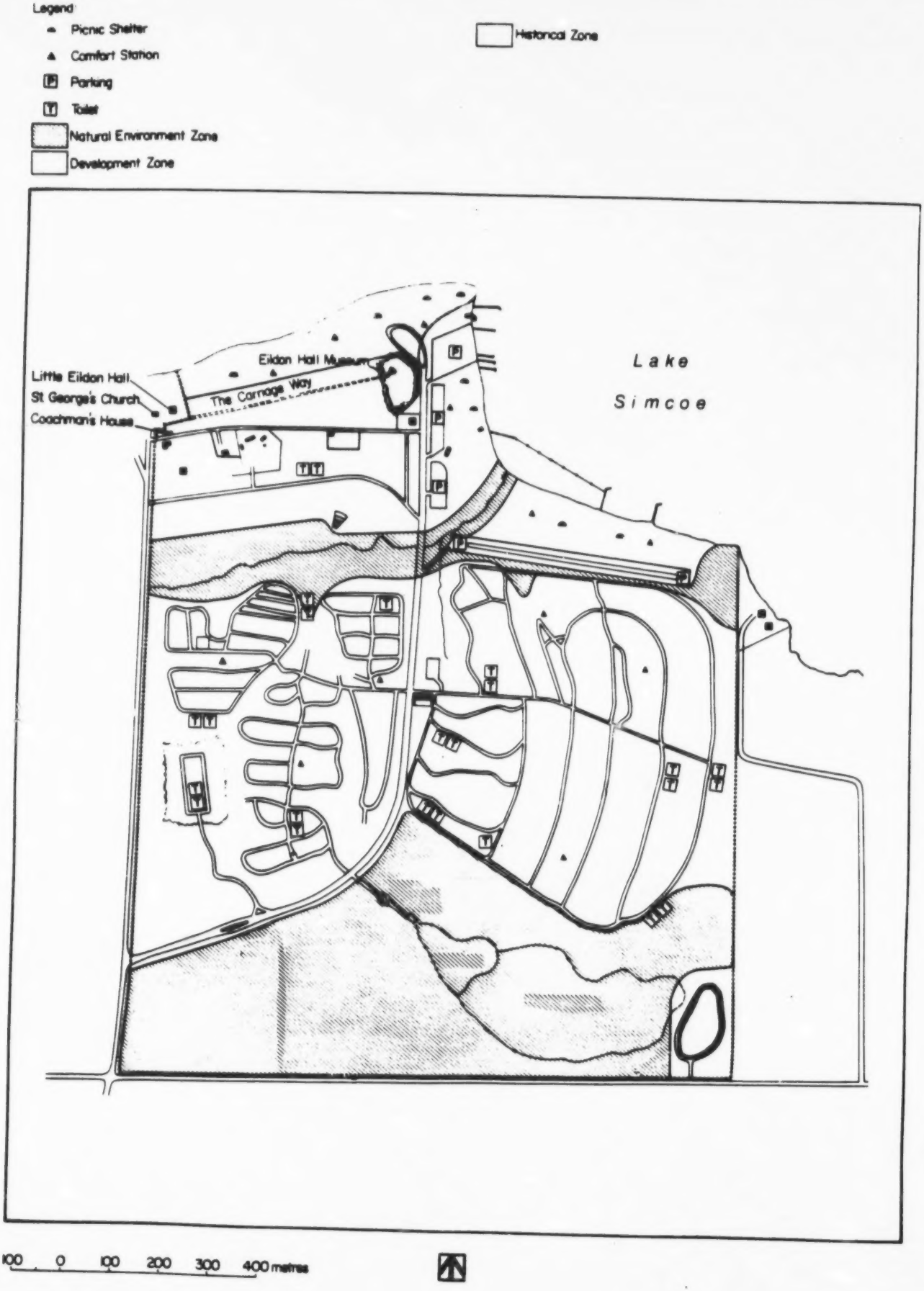
•This zone encompasses what remains of the original Sibbald Family Estate, which dates back to 1835.

Historical Zone Policies

•Building and landscape restorations will conform to high standards of historical

Figure 3

Zoning



authenticity and will be complementary to and not interfere with the integrity of the park's historical resource.

·To limit development to necessary signs (e.g., historical interpretive walk), interpretive, educational, research and management facilities and historical restorations.

·In providing additional recreational facilities, site design will be sensitive to the protection of the historical resources and historical ambience.

·To enhance the historical authenticity of this zone.

·To allow overflow recreation uses (i.e., picnicking) from the development zone to occur in this zone.

·To protect the environmentally sensitive bluff area from adverse forms of use and where economically feasible from natural erosional processes.

3.5.3 Natural Environment Zone

·This zone encompasses two separate areas with the following natural features: a diverse vegetation community in the southeast corner of the park; as well as marsh and swampy woodlands, with significant pike spawning habitats, in the northwest section of the park.

Natural Environment Zone Policies

·To protect the natural features found in these areas from detrimental forms of development and recreational use.

·To allow recreational activities compatible with the environment to occur.

·To take approved management initiatives to improve and enhance the environmental qualities and resources in these areas.

·To allow existing uses and facilities to remain (e.g., trailer dumping station, spray irrigation system, parking lot).

4. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

4.1 Land and Water Management

·Dredging silt around the park's docks will be allowed to maintain necessary boating depths.

·Because of the ice conditions, the Chippewa Indians, who have traditionally used the park for early winter and spring access to Georgina Island, will continue to have access.

·All recommendations from the engineer's report on beach stabilization, build-up and extension will be implemented.

·Lake Simcoe shorebluff erosion is a natural dynamic process. Costly engineered means of stabilizing the shorebluff erosion west of the point will be avoided. Instead the effects of erosion will be monitored and minimized by:

1. establishing native plant species along the shorebluff that are suitable for stabilizing slopes.
2. site planning set-backs of facilities from the bluff edge.
3. controlling pedestrian access on the bluffs by strategically locating beach stairs, and low vegetative barriers that ensure the continuation of popular vista points over the lake.
4. inexpensive shoreline protection projects.

•All new development will be sited to minimize the effects of the 1:100 year flood elevation of Lake Simcoe.

4.2 Vegetation Management

•All proposed planting projects will be directed by an approved Vegetation Management Plan. A planting plan section will: recommend measures for the long-term survival of the hedges, maintenance of the cedar buffer along the northwest shorebluff and special consideration to the management of existing plant material in the historical zone. As well the re-establishment of some of the landscape features of the original Sibbald estate in the historical zone (e.g., orchards, formal grounds within hedge encircling Eildon Hall, Carriageway) will be undertaken.

•For the park in general, acceptable management procedures involve controlling native and non-native insects and diseases that threaten the values for which the park was established or values outside of the park. Where control is desirable, it will be directed as narrowly as possible to the specific insect or disease so as to have minimal effects on other components of the park's environment.

4.3 Fauna Management

•When the park receives authorization to manage its offshore waters, commercial fishing and bait fishing will not be allowed in these waters.

•Sport fishing will be encouraged offshore from the park.

•A controlled, put-and-take fall pheasant hunt will continue to operate. The character of the vegetation and facilities will not be modified to accommodate the hunt. The hunt may be privatized in the future.

•Animal control if required may be carried out directly by the Ministry of Natural Resources or by local trappers, by arrangement with the Park Superintendent and wildlife staff.

•Fauna Management Plan

- This study will be produced and implemented with the assistance of the Fisheries and Wildlife Branches of the Ministry of Natural Resources. This plan should be done in conjunction with the Vegetation Management Plan. Topics to be addressed in the plan include:
  - special consideration given to the stream and swamp area of the park as a significant pike spawning habitat
  - future potential of the controlled pheasant hunt
  - control of nuisance animals

4.4 Cultural Resource Management

Sibbald Estate

•Restoration suggestions, as provided by the architectural report on Eildon Hall, will be implemented pending priorities and funding. The involvement of other ministries and agencies in restoration will be encouraged. Necessary steps will be taken to ensure the preservation of the collections and artifacts left in trust, by the Sibbald Estate, to the Crown.

•Historical Building Feasibility and Rehabilitation Study

- This study will investigate the possible uses (i.e. interpretive potential) of the other historic buildings (Indian Cabin, Coachman's House, Castle Dangerous) on the site, other than Eildon Hall. This study will also

investigate structural measures necessary to ensure the structural integrity and the original exterior characteristics of these historic buildings.

•The interiors of the Castle Dangerous, Indian Cabin and the Coachman's House will not be permanently altered, any more than at present, until their interpretive role is determined.

•It is not intended at this time to reconstruct buildings from the original estate, that have been removed.

•The grounds in the historic zone outside of the hedge that encircles Eildon Hall, will be maintained as a picnicking area. Proposals to enhance the interpretive aspects of the historic landscape include:

1. re-establishment of an orchard
2. maintaining and ensuring the continual delineation of the Carriageway by trees
3. strategically locating interpretive signage and display panels along self-guided historical interpretation walk
4. maintaining a low hedge around Eildon Hall.

•The historical authenticity of the estate will be further enhanced by the eventual removal of the park office building, as a non-historic structure immediately adjacent to this zone. This will happen only when the building is no longer suitable for park office purposes and a building can be provided elsewhere. Also, non-compatible uses can be phased out of the Coachman's House and the possible purchase and removal of the private residence known as Little Eildon. In this way, the integrity of the historical experience, from Eildon Hall all the way to St. George's Church, will be uninterrupted.

5. CLIENT SERVICES MANAGEMENT

5.1 Visitor Services

Of the four visitor services components (communication, interpretation, recreation, and outdoor education), the former three are emphasized at this park. In delivering these components, a volunteer program will be considered.

5.1.1 Communication

- inform park visitors about the park, its services, facilities and management concerns
- inform visitors about recreation and interpretive opportunities in the local area
- inform visitors of the role of the Ministry of Natural Resources
- instill a sense of respect in visitors for the park environment
- provide a means of feedback for visitors to communicate to the Ministry of Natural Resources

The above objectives will be achieved through all or some of the following: publications, signage, audio-visual presentations, displays, mass media and personal contact.

5.1.2 Interpretation

The following is a list of major and minor themes that have interpretation potential.

•Major Themes

- Sibbald Estate - The way the Sibbald's interacted with the land, the way they used the land for food, shelter and personal aesthetic expression and the way the land in turn, had an influence on them.

- Lake Simcoe Fisheries Assessment Unit - Displays, exhibits and brochures will aid in relaying this message.

•Minor Theme

- Opportunities include a self-guided nature trail through the various vegetative communities of the southern portion of the park. Facilities will include an upgraded and expanded nature trail, observation tower and brochures.

All of the above themes can be interpreted in evening programs, at the park amphitheatre, at the visitor services centre and on-site during special events. The use of volunteers in some projects will be encouraged.

5.1.3 Recreation

The park has a high potential for self-use recreation with a waterfront for sunbathing, swimming, fishing, boating, launching and docking of boats. As well, self-use recreation can occur on a play field, playgrounds and a hiking trail.

5.2 Recreation Management

•Sibbald will offer both camping and day use, on a year-round basis. Winter camping will be provided as demand justifies. There will be no camping during the fall pheasant hunt.

•Park management will monitor capacity levels and alter, if need be, the capacities in response to environmental impacts on the landscape (e.g., day-use vehicle capacity has been limited to a maximum of 1800 cars.)

•An increased level and quality of services and facilities will be provided to more adequately reflect the usage of this park.

•Site design measures will be taken to more effectively distribute park users while minimizing environmental impact and conflicts of use.

5.3 Commercial Services

The following existing tourism services appear to be adequate for the park's needs:

- boat concession offering rowboats, sailboats and canoes
- snack bar concession
- firewood concession

Additional concessions may be added (e.g., motorboats) or existing ones modified.

5.4 Marketing

•Marketing and operational initiatives, as outlined in an updated "Marketing Manual for Sibbald Point Provincial Park" will be implemented in order to obtain the above results.

6. DEVELOPMENT

The following is a list of development items that are proposed for the park (see Figure 4). Approved site plans are required for all development.

6.1 Camping

•Forty-two existing campsites in the northwest corner of the campground will be electrified, bringing the total number of electrical sites to 159.

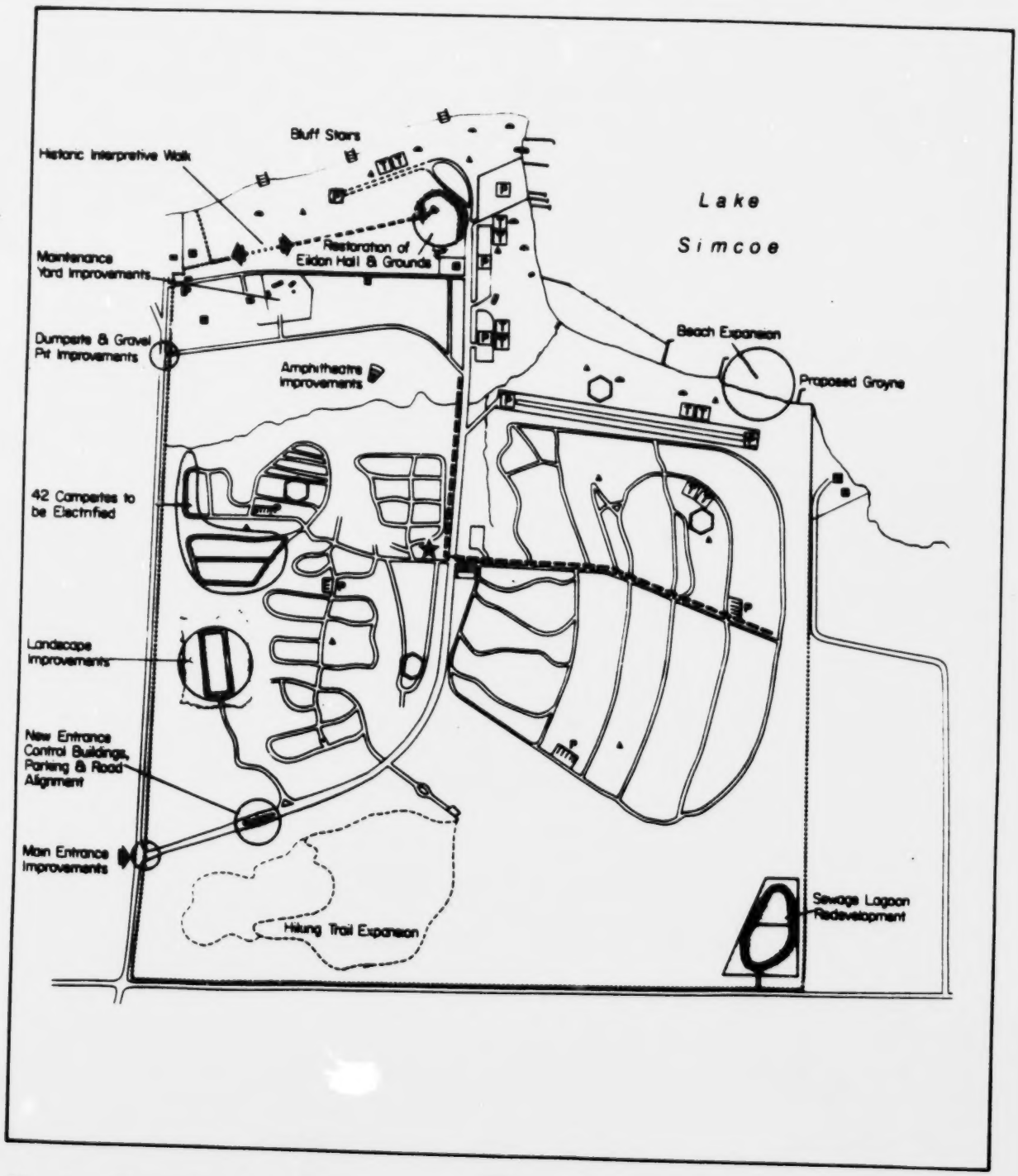
•Three playgrounds and sandboxes will be provided in the campground.

Figure 4

Proposed Development

Legend:

- Picnic Shelter
- Comfort Station
- Parking
- Toilet
- Visitor Parking Lots
- Playground
- Trailer Sanitation Site
- Pedestrian Path
- Park Boundary



•As funding permits all campground comfort stations will have showers and may have laundry facilities.

•Visitor and second-car parking will be relocated within the campgrounds.

•A trailer sanitation station will be provided within the west campground, in addition to the present facility, which may be upgraded.

6.2 Day Use

•Third phase of beach expansion (groyne, installation of new sand) will be implemented.

•Improvements to parking, landscaping, drainage and the installation of playground facilities in the beach picnic area.

•A parking lot (50 spaces) and access road will be provided in the northwest corner of the park.

•A pair of vault privies, with outdoor lighting will be installed for winter use adjacent to winter parking lot.

•A wading pool (a low priority) may be constructed in the day-use area near the point.

6.3 Trails

•The existing hiking trail will be expanded and improved. Though a low priority, an interpretive viewing tower will be built along the nature trail, adjacent to the lagoon.

•A historical interpretive walk will be provided through the historic zone, and include signage and unobtrusive interpretive display panels.

•A fitness trail may be provided in the beach and/or campground area, depending on demand.

•A bicycle trail (lane) will be considered in any future major road work.

•Pedestrian circulation from the campground to the day-use area will be improved with the provision of a pedestrian path along the north side of the east-west road in the east campground, and along the west side of the main north-south road.

•Snowmobiles will be allowed on roads and designated trails only.

•Cross-country skiing trails will be provided.

6.4 Administration and Service Facilities

•A new entry control facility (gate house, roads, parking) will be built.

•Eildon Hall will be restored as per architects plans.

•Five additional pairs of vault privies will be provided.

•Amphitheatre improvements include lighting, seating, and audio-visual equipment.

•A signage theme and plan will be developed.

•The existing sewage lagoon will be enlarged and rehabilitated.

•The maintenance area will undergo site improvements.

•The boat launch area will undergo site improvements.

•The existing dump site and gravel pit, at the north (autumn) entrance will undergo rehabilitation and aesthetic improvements.

•The Assistant Superintendent's residence will be eventually phased out.

7. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The following is a high and low priority listing of development projects planned for the park. All development items may be implemented as funds and priorities permit and require approved site plans.

HIGH

•construction of new entrance control facility
•sewage lagoon improvements
•addition of showers and laundry facilities to 5 existing campground comfort stations
•pedestrian path along main roads
•installation of play equipment
•redevelopment of old group campground

LOW

•improvements to existing swimming beach picnic area
•boat launch area improvements
•third phase of beach expansion
•electrification of 42 existing campsites
•parking lot in the northwest picnic area and 3 bluff stairways
•pair of vault privies for winter use
•amphitheatre improvements
•sign plan for park
•phasing in of Eildon Hall redevelopment/restoration (per architect's plan) excluding phase 4A
•additional visitor and second car parking lots
•improvements to maintenance area
•upgrading and expanding hiking trail
•landscape improvements to group campground
•provision of 5 additional pairs of vault privies
•establishment of fitness trail in campground area
•dump site and gravel pit. rehabilitation and entrance improvements
•construction of additional trailer santitation station
•provision of wading pool
•development items dependent on other efforts

- establishment of the historical interpretive walk is dependent on the historical study to determine the interpretive role of the estate buildings (other than Eildon Hall)
- provision of bicycle lanes is dependent on future road works

•A Vegetative Management Plan and Fauna Management Plan should be done in conjunction with one another. The Historical Building Feasibility and Rehabilitation Study needs to be done before the historical resources of the site can be fully interpreted. All three plans will be given top priority for completion.

This management plan will be reviewed when major issues surface and at least once within the next ten years. Any necessary plan amendments will be made with public involvement in accordance with apparent needs.

8. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Public consultation during the management planning process for Sibbald Point focused on the local area and included the following:

•a news release and advertisement in the Keswick Georgina Advocate advising that this management plan was available for review at the park and district office

•copies of this plan forwarded to local levels of government for review (Regional Municipality of York, Township of Georgina, South Lake Simcoe Conservation Authority)

•copies of the news release sent to interest groups [Sibbald Memorial Museum Trustees, Chippewa Band (Georgina Island)]

•where appropriate, contact made with adjacent landowners by park management, to inform these landowners of the plan and its contents (Lee Farm Cottagers Association)

•announcements and posters on display in the park during summer of 1984 advising park visitors of availability of plan for review

For additional information on methods used and results of various forms of preliminary efforts with public consultation, please see the Appendix in Sibbald Point Provincial Park Management Plan-Background Information Document.

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